



The mission of South River Watershed Alliance is to protect and restore the water quality and biodiversity of the South River watershed to the beneficial use of people and wildlife.

## November 2014

In This Issue

EPA's Failure in 3D

Faces of South River's Future

Local Artist Paddles and Paints  
South River

Upcoming Events

Pole Bridge Creek  
Yearlong Tribute to Tribes

Repeats and Reminders  
Preview New Map of South River



Davis Middle School Volunteers

**We are working to increase our Twitter following. Follow us on Twitter and keep up with what is going on with SRWA and South River between newsletters. Share this newsletter.**

## EPA's Failure in 3D

Clean water is our most precious resource, we cannot live without it. The fight for clean water and this is

not an exaggeration, is primarily waged by local watershed groups like SRWA. The mission of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as posted on the agency's website "is to protect human health and the environment". To accomplish this mission, again based on information from the agency's website, EPA "develop and enforce regulations". Based on



South River

its mission, EPA should be SRWA's number one ally in the fight for a cleaner South River. Instead, through its inaction, the nation's premier regulatory agency is stymieing SRWA's efforts to improve water quality in the river. EPA's failure spans three dimensions:

**Public Participation** - The cornerstone of the Clean Water Act is the provision that guarantees public participation. The 30-day public comment period associated with the development of a new Clean Water permit cannot begin until a draft permit is issued. The five year delay in the issuance of a new draft permit for the City of Atlanta's combined sewer overflow (CSO) system is effectively circumventing the public participation provision of the Clean Water Act and is denying public access to the permitting process. The Clean Water permit is the only safeguard against pollution the South River has and its effectiveness depends on the ability of the public to participate.

**Water Quality Violations** - According to its Clean Water permit, the City of Atlanta is allowed an average of four combined sewer overflows (CSO) per year into Intrenchment Creek from its Custer Avenue CSO facility. By law, these overflows cannot contribute to water quality violations. They must meet established water quality standards. By not requiring that Atlanta meet the requirements of its current permit and by not mandating the issuance of a new draft permit, EPA is giving unspoken approval to continued pollution of Intrenchment Creek and the South River.

**Regulatory Responsibility** - EPA's inaction is contributing to a circumstance that gives Atlanta's expired and violated Clean Water permit the force of law. While the EPA is not obliged to pursue every expired permit or permit violation, Georgia is a "primacy" state which means that the EPA has delegated to the state the authority of make decisions affecting clean water. However, delegation does not mean abdication. The ultimate responsibility for Clean Water Act compliance and enforcement lies with EPA.

EPA should live up to its mission and become a protector of the environment in words and in actions.

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## Faces of South River's Future

In corporate America, succession planning is considered to be a strategic imperative one that is essential for ensuring the future survival and success of the company. Just as businesses plan for the future, so must environmental organizations especially community-based groups that heavily depend on volunteers. Donating our time to a cause or effort is one way of showing that we care. Activities such as removing trash and debris from the South River teach youth the importance of respecting and protecting the environment, prerequisites for becoming nature's stewards. Providing hands on opportunities for youth to appreciate and connect with the outdoors is key to cultivating the next generation of environmental guardians who are indispensable to ensuring that our rivers, streams and wildlife not only survive but thrive. SRWA salutes our young river stewards who are the future of the South River.



Davis Middle School South River clean up volunteers (Sept 2014)



Davis Middle School student remove aluminum cans from South River (Sept 2014)



Rivers Alive cleanup volunteers at Albert Shoals Park (Rockdale County) (Oct. 2014)



Rivers Alive cleanup at Albert Shoals Park (Rockdale County) (Oct. 2014)

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## Local Artist Paddles and Paints South River



Original South River inspired art by Phil Delestrez

At this year's SRWA South River Jamboree silent auction, artist Phil Delestrez's paintings of South River took first prize. A Park Naturalist with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Delestrez often volunteers on

SRWA's river outings where he shares his expertise about the flora, fauna, and geography of the South River with paddlers. Inspiration for each painting comes from the river's actual landscape which is hand-painted on natural wood paddles, making each one a Delestrez original. The paintings feature native rivercane with a Pearly Eye butterfly (top) and riverscape of one of the river's stunning weathered granite outcroppings (bottom).

The painting are not just beautiful, they also tell an important story about the South River. Rivercane is endangered and is the exclusive habitat of the Pearly Eye butterfly larvae. Survival of the Pearly Eye depends on the survival of rivercane. Fast moving stormwater can carve granite into interesting shapes but that same stormwater causes extreme riverbank erosion and scouring. Delestrez's art skillfully shows off South River's beauty while reminding us of its fragility.

For more information about Phil Delestrez and his art [click here](#).

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## Upcoming Events

### **South River Canoe Outing, Saturday, November 1, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Due to several cancellations we have a few seats available on the last canoe out of the year. For additional information contact Jackie at 404-285-3756.

### **Rivercane Reintroduction Project, Service and Learn at Panola Mountain State Park, Saturday, November 22, 9:00 - 1:00 p.m.**

Help restore rivercane habitat by removing invasive Chinese privet and learn why rivercane is critical to the recovery of the South River. To sign up [click here](#).

**Signup for future Rivercane Reintroduction Project, Service and Learn dates.** [Click here](#).

## Upcoming Events at Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve

### **Home School Thursdays, November 20, 10:00 - 3:00 p.m., Panola Mountain State Park Nature Center.**

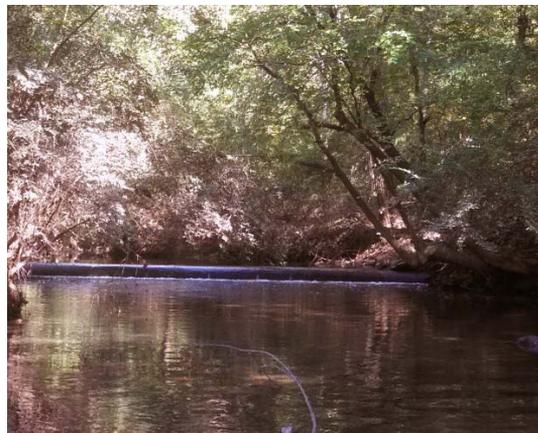
Join a park ranger and other excited home-schoolers during this fun educational program. We will be discussing different topics related to science and nature directly relating to the current season. Two age groups are available: Ages 8-12 10:00 -12:00 p.m.. Ages 13 & up 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. [More info](#).

For more information and additional events visit [www.arabiaalliance.org](http://www.arabiaalliance.org).

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## Pole Bridge Creek

Located in DeKalb County, Pole Bridge Creek begins in the City of Redan, west of the corner of Redan Road and Young Road (starting coordinates: 33.748917, -84.159395). The creek travels south crossing I-20 and intersects South River before Klondike Road (ending coordinates: 33.637545, -84.137831). The length of the creek from headwaters to the South River is approximately 10 miles. Land use along its route is mostly residential with some commercial. The DeKalb County Pole Bridge Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility is located where the creek meets South River. This facility treats wastewater generated in both the Lithonia area along with some from Gwinnett County. The designated use of the creek by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division is fishing. This stream is in generally good health and is *supporting* its designated use of fishing likely making it the only major creek tributary to the South River in DeKalb County meeting its designated use.



Pole Bridge Creek as it flows into South River

## Repeats & Reminders

### DeKalb County BoC

Lee May, Interim DeKalb County CEO  
404-371-2881  
[Email](#)

District 1 - Vacant

Jeff Rader, District 2  
404-371-2863  
[Email](#)

Larry Johnson, District 3  
404-371-2425  
[Email](#)

Sharon Barnes Sutton, District 4  
404-371-4749  
[Email](#)

Lee May, District 5

### Preview New Map of South River

Do you wonder where the South River goes or the route it takes to get there. As many of you know, SRWA is working to create a complete map of the South River. The map is being developed in three sections and the first section is almost complete. Our goal is to make this map as user-friendly, simple to use and understand, as possible. To ensure that this goal is achieved, we need your feedback. Take a few minutes to review the first section of the map. Let us know if there is something we should consider adding or changing. Your comments will help us make this important educational tool even better. You can enter your comment(s) right on the website page. To access map [click here](#).

404-371-4745

[Email](#)

Kathie Gannon, District 6

404-371-4909

[Email](#)

Stan Watson, District 7

404-371-3681

[Email](#)



Youth Volunteers



Youth Volunteers